

DSC Community Group
Sermon Summary, 02/05/2012

Title: "From One Degree of Glory to Another"
Series: State of the Communion 2012

Text: 2 Cor. 3:18
Preacher: Ryan Kelly

What is a successful church? God has answered this question in his best selling book, the Bible, and He is more wise than any executive or CEO. Paul describes for us the growth of the Christian and the growth of the church in this way: "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another." (2 Cor. 3:18). The Bible is not a slogan factory; Bible study is not mining out slogans for motivation. To understand this verse properly, we have to see how it fits into the whole of the book.

The Theme: God's Ever-Increasing Glory amidst Ever-Present Weakness

1. What is God's glory?

- God's glory is hard to define, but we could say that it is the revelation of himself - his attributes, his presence, his beauty.

2. What is the plan for God's glory?

- 2 Cor 3:7-16. God's glory is revealed increasingly across time in God's plan. Moses got glimpses of God's glory, but now we begin see it and enter into it through Christ (2 Cor. 4:4,6). One day we will see him face to face (1 Jn. 3:2).
- God's glory is revealed in us alongside our great weakness (2 Cor. 4:7-10, 16-8; 11:24-29; 12:7-10).

3. What are the cheap imitations of God's glory?

- Super-Apostles came to Corinth boasting in themselves. They came with impressive letters of commendation, charged a hefty fee (for ministry), and argue "you get what you pay for" (implication: Paul's cheap), were rhetorically sophisticated, they boasted the way the world does in their strength, they had "tampered with God's Word" (2 Cor. 4:2), they consider themselves triumphant. But neither Paul nor Jesus were great according to the standards by which they judged themselves.
- Paul repeatedly contrasts himself with them (2 Cor. 2:14-3:5; 4:5; 5:12; 11:3, 6; 12:1-10; 1 Cor. 2:1-5). So where does real strength lie? (2 Cor. 3:4-5).

4. How do we get more of God's glory now?

- Wirth the gift of an unveiled face (2 Cor. 3:18). And Paul tells us that the norm is for this glory to be seen in the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4, 6). Christ is the mirror that reflects divine glory to us and He is seen in the Scriptures.

5. What are the results of this increasing glory?

- Since we become what we behold (Ps. 115:3-9), Christians become like Christ as they behold Christ in the gospel/Scripture (1 Jn. 3:2). Beholding Christ emboldens us (2 Cor. 3:11-12; 4:13, 15; 5:11, 14, 18), compels us to love and sacrifice (2 Cor. 8-9), and causes us to groan through our suffering in this age toward eternity (2 Cor. 5:1-9).

Sample Questions

- Considering the past year, how specifically has God revealed His glory in and through your own weakness? How has he humbled you and, through that humbling, strengthened you to see him better?
- Ryan said that glory is hard to describe but that it is something we know when we encounter it. And he said that God's glory is revealed to us in the gospel, or in Christ, or in Scripture. When have you encountered the weight/greatness/majesty/glory of God?
- If it is true that we become what we worship, what must we do if we're to become like Christ, and how have you seen this beholding/becoming relationship work itself out in your life?